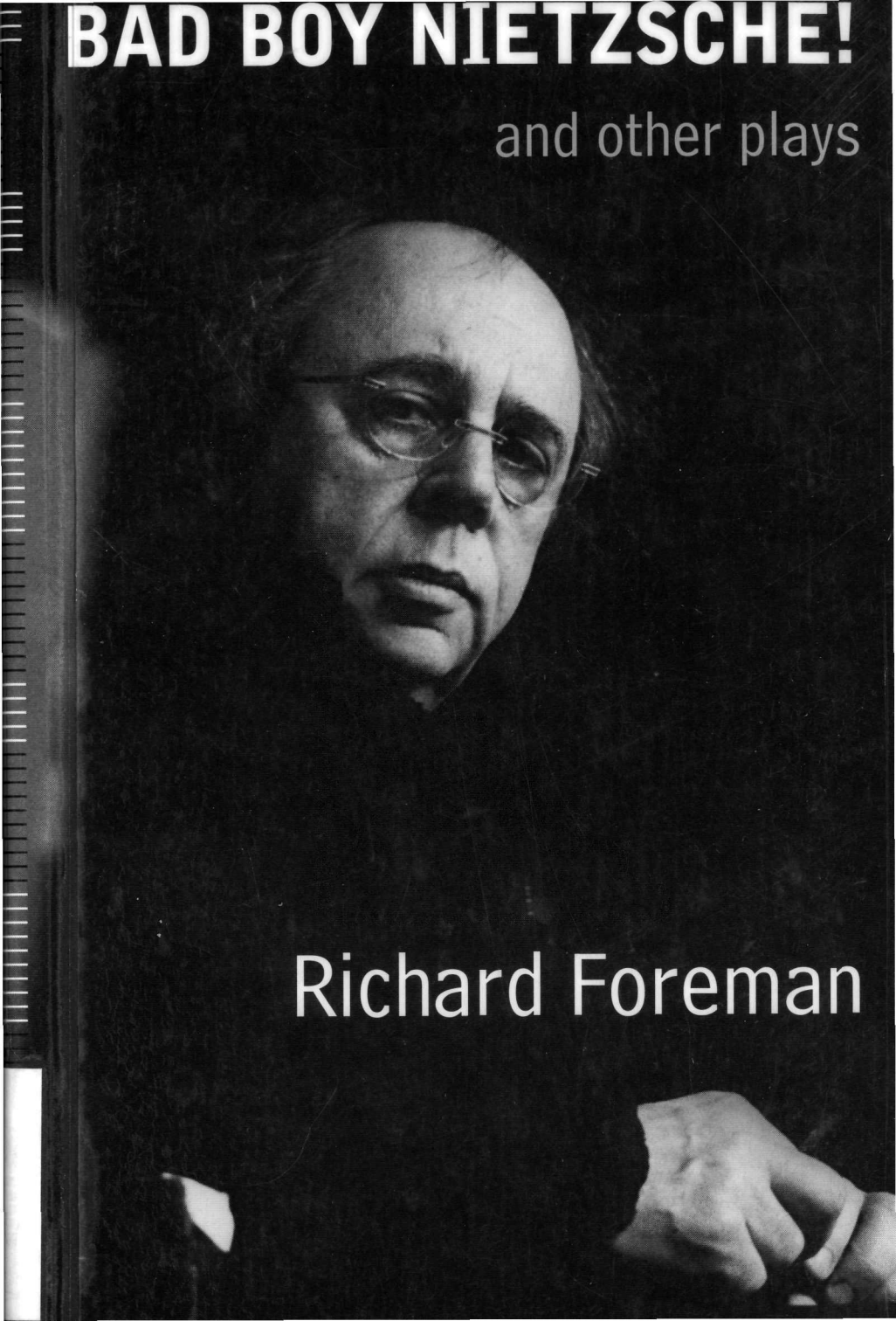
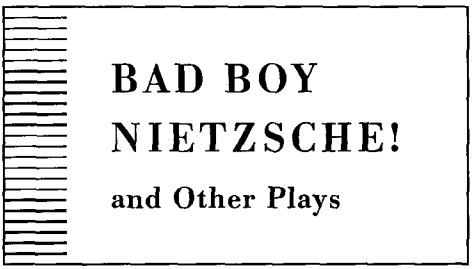
BAD BOY NIETZSCHE!

and other plays



Richard Foreman



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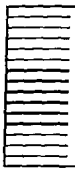


Bad Behavior

Richard Foreman and Sophie Haviland

PRODUCTION HISTORY

Bad Behavior. Produced by Susan Solt, Dean of CalArts School of Theatre, at the California Institute of the Arts Walt Disney Modular Theatre, Los Angeles. October 18–28, 2000. Written and directed by Richard Foreman and Sophie Haviland. Designed by Richard Foreman.

Shaughn Buchholz
YunJung Chang
Monica Marie Contreras
Kathryn Falcone
Lawrence Lacey
Charles Leonard
Waleed Moursi
Adrienne Moursi
Adrienne Pearson
Allain Rochel
Nika Serras

AUTHOR'S NOTE

This play was produced at the California Institute of the Arts and created in a rather unusual way. In order to disrupt my usual way of working and get myself into some hopefully productive "trouble," I approached Sophie Haviland, who had been the administrator of my theater for several years, as well as a writer and director of her own work, to participate in an unusual sort of collaboration.

We both wrote a series of short, independent texts on the theme of unrequited love. Neither of us was aware of what the other was writing. When a considerable amount of material had been amassed, we took both collections and together decided which pages we would use in the finished piece. Then I took the remaining material and "collaged" it into a play, designed a set and selected the music.

It was after this that the radical nature of the collaboration began. When we arrived at CalArts, the actual staging proceeded in a most unusual fashion. Rehearsals were broken down into a series of three-hour sessions over eight weeks. I would rehearse the play for three hours, then Sophie would rehearse the next few pages for three hours, then back to me for the next few pages—and back and forth like that until we reached the end of the play.

Then the whole process was repeated—but as we went through the play in subsequent rehearsals, the three-hour rule would present us with a different section of the play to work on each time, and each of us would often be reworking material that had already been staged by the other. Our rule was that each of us could freely rework the staging the other had created, with no interference or input from the other during each three-hour period.

This meant both of us would sometimes sit there in anguish, wondering, Why is that great scene I just staged being radically

altered? We were totally open with the cast, telling them what was happening and how hard it was for both of us to see our material so reworked. After rehearsals we made no attempt to persuade the other to do things differently. We remained true to the process and did not try to influence each other to see the play one way or another. We simply let the process—allowing one layer of directorial vision supersede the other—be reapplied day after day throughout the rehearsal period.

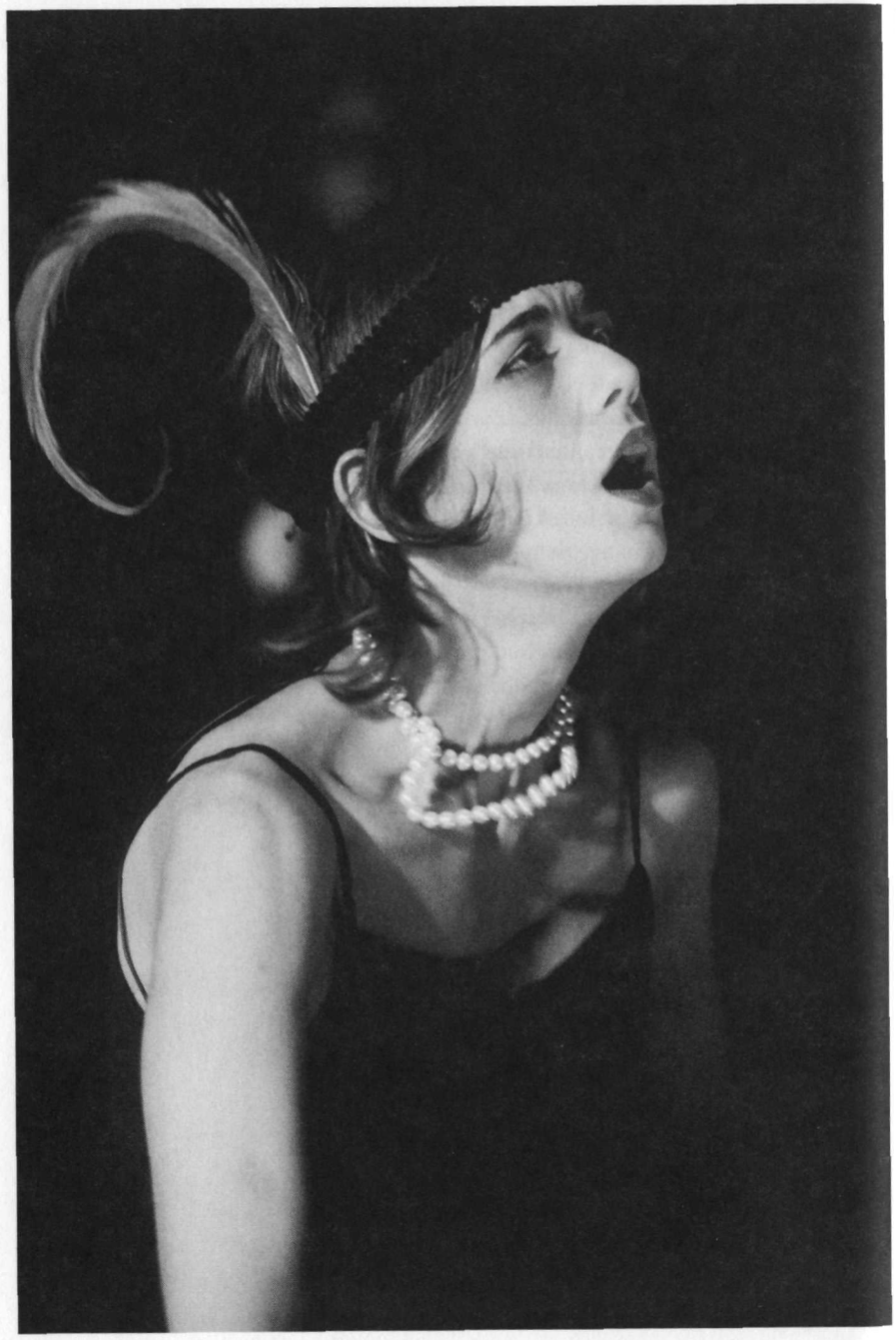
We both found the experience highly frustrating much of the time—and yet it was extremely provocative, producing much powerful material we would never have discovered by ourselves. I am not aware of other directors making any similar experiments before or since, but both Sophie and I—while swearing never to try the same thing again—were more than happy with the results. (The production, incidentally, was named one of the ten best plays of the year by the theater critic of the *Los Angeles Times*.)

NOTE ON PRODUCTION

This play about unrequited love is a dance of shifting choreographed patterns and voices, and since the actors in the original production moved in patterns more abstract and varied than was the case with the other plays included in this collection, this text does not attempt to describe the stage action in as much detail.

In addition, it is expected that future productions will employ different-sized casts, in spaces that will probably not be as large as the vast space of the original production.

The performers' real names are used throughout the script.



The play takes place in a large empty space with four large rolling blackboards at the rear. Five men in red bathrobes and skullcaps, and five women in dark cocktail dresses.

There is continual music, and a variety of other sound effects punctuate the performance.

The play begins in darkness.

FEMALE VOICE: Where are you hiding, Maurice?
MALE VOICE: Deep inside you, Miranda.

(The lights come up. Allain is downstage. The other four men and the five women stand in groups, far in the distance.)

ALLAIN: Arriving, finally, in the city of the attractive women—I suddenly realized my soul was being activated. But how could I possibly keep this energy from dissipating?
VOICE: Oh no!
ALLAIN: I wanted to focus my energy on internal experience.

Releasing, finally, a world under my gaze—which was beginning to speak to me.

(Everyone runs forward to join Allain, as the blackboards close in to make a room.)

WALEED *(Indicating Nika)*: Guess what, my friend. She is the person I've been looking for.
ALLAIN: Stupid.
NIKA: Guess what. In no way will I gratify your expectations.
WALEED: OK. My desire for enlightenment is such—
NIKA: What kind of enlightenment?
WALEED: I have no desire for you to gratify my expectations.

(The others point at him and hiss.)

Did I say the wrong thing, my friends?
NIKA: My friend. Meaning no energy. And I give nothing to such people.
WALEED: How powerful I find that withdrawal of your affection.
NIKA: Then by all means—watch me leave, and weep. *(She goes)*
VOICE: Careful!
WALEED: Now that I am alone, I do suppose there is no reason for me not to weep. *(Cries)*
MONICA: May I collect your tears, you sweet, gentle, heartbroken gentleman?
WALEED: But my tears belong to me, don't they?
MONICA: I desire to seed an entire ocean, of course.
WALEED: If enough of my tears enter such an ocean—
MONICA: Then it becomes—inhabitable. Believe me, I flourish in such an ocean.
WALEED: I believe you.
VOICE: Oh no!
MONICA: I withdraw into my secret life. You don't know what goes on there.
WALEED: Are you inside your secret life right now?
MONICA: Of course I am.
WALEED: Hey—I see nothing of your secret life.
MONICA: OK. Then invent the tools enabling one to discuss such things, OK? You are my compass.

(Others hiss and point to Shaughn.)

SHAUGHN *(To Adrienne)*: OK. Then you must be my ship.
ADRIENNE: Who knows to what exotic continents we are sailing?

SHAUGHN: I want a small world, with someone like you in the very middle.
VOICE: Oh no!
ADRIENNE: OK. Imagine a story—
VOICE: Careful.

(The women all have pictures of saints, which they manipulate in different patterns on the floor, on the walls.)

ADRIENNE:

There is a picture of a woman who does not exist.
Who never existed.
And there is a world that goes crazy for her image.
Which is plastered on walls, on movie screens, on guidebooks—this face.
There is something about this face that people crave.
They want to remember having known her.

And her image appears on the waterstain of an ancient church.
In a small town.
But no one is noticing this special image—
Our Lady of the Disempowered.
Our Lady of the Broken Hearts.
Our Lady of Miracles.
Our Lady of the Blind, the Lame
—the Broken Ankle.
No one notices.

(All run around the room several times, as if with broken ankles.)

VOICE: Where are you hiding, Maurice?
SHAUGHN: There is no story in this, except the following story. One person always loves another person more than that other person loves that first person.
VOICE: Oh no!
NIKA: And this is a great opportunity, is it not? For the first person to generate a wonderful energy—which does not happen very

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VOICE: Where are you hiding, Maurice?
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VOICE: Oh no!
NIKA: And this is a great opportunity, is it not? For the first person to generate a wonderful energy—which does not happen very

often, because the world has become a place that is a spiritual wilderness—

ALL: Right!

NIKA: —and to change that circumstance requires great inner violence.

YUN: Who dares that inner violence in today's mediocre universe?

CHARLES: In today's mediocre universe, my friends, there can be no story. And this story—this story can only happen in bits and pieces.

Because anything more than bits and pieces turns into a lie about this barren world with no spiritual potential.

KATHRYN: Here was my solution.

CHARLES: Stupid.

KATHRYN: I saw myself like a saint from long ago. I had a halo about my head and I was watching a soldier shaking a little rag doll, which turned into a live girl. And I did nothing at all. I was meant to be there. I was meant to bear witness.

ALLAIN: You were filled with compassion.

CHARLES: Stupid.

KATHRYN: It was glowing inside of me.

CHARLES: Stupid.

KATHRYN: I felt her body inside of mine.

LAWRENCE: Well, all saints are martyred for their visions.

But some were killed—just for talking too much.

KATHRYN: Ah—gossiping with God himself—that makes it worthwhile.

ALLAIN: No—just a tickling sensation, which means you could be falling sick.

YUN: Oh no!

ALLAIN: Sick—sick—sick!—

KATHRYN: But I have come alive—so this would be a sickness worth suffering.

LAWRENCE: OK. Let me give you a relevant book to throw on the fire.

(They have all lined up with books in hand.)

KATHRYN: Don't burn it!

ALLAIN: No, burn it. It talks about love gone belly-up! It talks about God.

KATHRYN: All right— *(Throws away the book)*

ALLAIN: Really?

KATHRYN: I've never understood this thing about God, I'm afraid—

(Allain laughs at her mockingly.)

—because I was always such a plausible skeptic.

Because I've charmed snakes—

(The others point at her and shout: "Hah!")

—called lost souls back from the dead—

(The others cry out: "Ohhh!" in shock.)

—all with no sense of wonder.

WOMEN: Here it comes—

(They laugh and scatter.)

KATHRYN: Jesus, Mary and Joseph! Just visions from the tops of mountains I've been climbing since childhood—no mysteries.

ALLAIN: OK. OK. We have never understood the idea of God.

VOICE: Where are you hiding, Maurice?

KATHRYN: Determined to build my own world, please—the center around which everything else revolves.

(The men advance toward the women.)

NIKA: Yes! All those drunk men. —All those foolish men.

ADRIENNE: And I have been the good apprentice in a short skirt. But there was never any sense of God.

NIKA: Only now—I start to feel a different kind of sight—an itch inside my shoulder so I cannot sleep.

VOICE: Careful.

(Nika twitches convulsively. Then she is quiet.)

NIKA: What is this itch?

WALEED: OK. I shall give you a book of saints as a guide.

ADRIENNE: I am afraid of your maze of books. You keep feeding them to me until I cannot breathe.
VOICE: Careful.

(Adrienne laughs as she and Nika roll together on the floor.)

WALEED: Oh my goodness. Those girls—they connect me to something—
ADRIENNE: I don't doubt it—your body seeking to avoid itself.
But please—let's try some genuine experience instead.
WALEED *(Leering at her)*: Oh yes—come near—and I shall scratch your back.
ADRIENNE: Shall I make the bed first?
WALEED: I am not a betting man.
ALL *(Except Waleed and Adrienne)*: Oh yes!

(They run, collide with the wall and fall down.)

MONICA: I slipped on something.
ADRIENNE: I bet you a dollar you'll regret this.
WALEED: Does that really matter? I have removed—even the possibility of failure.
ADRIENNE: What's my name?
VOICE: Careful.
WALEED: Miranda—OSTERMAN!

(Adrienne moans sexually.)

NIKA *(Approaching Waleed)*: What did you call me? *(Pause. They kiss)*
See! She is in love with her silent papa.

(Adrienne and Nika both kiss Waleed, who pulls away.)

WALEED: Isn't every pretty girl? That is why—
VOICE: Careful.
WALEED: She learns to kiss with her tongue.
ADRIENNE: I remember when I learned to kiss. Guess when?
I brought boys home to my empty house.
VOICE: Oh no!

ADRIENNE: Come on boys! Come on!

(All the women run downstage and look at pictures of saints the men are holding at the blackboards.)

Remember? We took turns lying in the bunk bed and rolling around.
WOMEN: Ooooh!
ADRIENNE: School uniforms?

(The women all dance about, giggling.)

SHUT UP!

(Everything stops.)

Those boys in their blue-and-gray corduroy trousers.
—I wasn't afraid to touch them. I had looked at *Fritz the Cat* comics hidden under my parents' bed and I wanted to be fucked like a cat in heat and have big snowy tits. Ohhh—I was leaping on my cousin— *(Runs and smashes against a wall)*
Flailing against the bulk of his joy—
Weeping with laughter. My face in the pillow—
The boys would go home and touch themselves.
YUN *(Enters holding a portrait of a saint high in the air)*: I liked rolling around with the boys.
I wanted to be held. I still want to be held by a barrel-chested man. And squeezed tight until I am safe.
ADRIENNE: Hey! What's she doing here?
MONICA: Me. I got tonsillitis and lay in bed and read those French comic books? They took out my father's tonsils so I wouldn't get sick anymore. They thought they could keep me whole, preserved, intact.
My father did not enjoy the operation. He came home gaunt—that's right, gaunt and frail—and I was afraid. He sat at the breakfast table and we had breakfast. He picked up a glass of orange juice— I watched him take a drink and then lurch up from the table and run down the hallway, silently. Running through the rooms of our house in crazy pain from the acid on his raw throat. In silence.
YUN: Silent—movie dad.

MONICA: One year later they took my tonsils out anyway.
I kept them in a plastic jar next to my father's knee cartilage.
Two—that's right. Two little jars of formaldehyde.
It was so comforting to me!

(The men have assembled behind her with floral bouquets.)

LAWRENCE: OK, beautiful Miranda. I too have brought you flowers.
NIKA: No. That's not the impression we get.
LAWRENCE: Well—these flowers are poison flowers, of course. *(Pause)*
That's why I am waiting for my beloved, of course.
ADRIENNE: She is invisible. You are being tested, that's all. Because you choose to be tested.
LAWRENCE: Of course I choose to be tested.
NIKA: But I choose to be tested too, goddamn it!
LAWRENCE: OK. Do we share—eyesight? Do we share brain vibrations?
ADRIENNE: What is it—I mean, why is it that we share brain vibrations?
LAWRENCE: OK. I am with you, beautiful lady.
ADRIENNE: OK. I am with you.
LAWRENCE: Your eyes are my eyes, right?
ADRIENNE: Prove it!
CHARLES: Follow the snake, my dear.
KATHRYN: Are you daring me?

(A rope has been stretched across the stage.)

CHARLES: Hands along string, into the depths of the labyrinth.
KATHRYN: Suppose I'm afraid of what I might do in such darkness.
CHARLES: There is nothing inside but desire—that's my guess. So hold on to your hair.
KATHRYN: I have no way to connect things. Do I have a name?
CHARLES: Follow the string. But hold my hands until I give you a name.

(There is a series of sharp explosions. While the others fall to the floor, Kathryn's head is covered with a cloth. She is transformed into an oracle.)

KATHRYN: There will be war—on the open sea.

CHARLES *(Embracing her from behind)*: I shall call you Miranda. Then—you belong to me.
VOICE: Careful.
KATHRYN: There will be a war on the sea when I leave here.
CHARLES: Yes, fathers will turn to stone and daughters will turn to milk—
KATHRYN: —from my own breasts. From my own longing.
CHARLES: I shall touch your hair with my tongue.
KATHRYN: Am I looking for the way out?
CHARLES: All that is good sleeps in your head, Miranda.
KATHRYN: Why do I not trust my own counsel?

(A crash.)

MONICA *(Sings)*: Who is Miranda?

(Music plays as they all dance about and rearrange the stage.)

NIKA *(To Lawrence)*: What would you like of my life?

(Lawrence moves toward her.)

Careful—it will break your back, Maurice.
WALEED: That's OK. The locus of the heart is my broken back.
KATHRYN: I did not want an extra heart.
I wanted less than that
Or a little less density than that.
NIKA: Mister—you have a very heavy heart.
WALEED: Let's not talk about bad things all of a sudden.
NIKA: No, let's talk about bad things all of a sudden. Because without bad things—the zip-zip I am hungry for—you know—it's just not happening around here.
LAWRENCE: Liar. It's definitely happening around here.
NIKA: Liar.
LAWRENCE: Do I lie?
Do I lie when my very own eyes burn inside Miranda Osterman's blood red smile?
ADRIENNE: Liar—
LAWRENCE: Do I lie when my very own lips tremble like the open wound inside my own terrible heart?

(A crash. The others dance to a jazz tune.)

Look at her—look at her now—licking her red fingers and laughing at me.

NIKA: Oh, you're such a drag.

(All laugh.)

LAWRENCE: Which means—I know. Now I know—she is unaware of my desperate imagination. Because she is just calming her own nerves and pretending to be happy.

(A crash, followed by music.)

KATHRYN: Jesus, Mary and Joseph! —Whenever I hear that old-fashioned music—

SHAUGHN: Please—let's not talk about bad things.

KATHRYN: Guess what. I remember being in love.

ALLAIN: Ah, you see? It's the old-fashioned music that made it happen—nothing but music.

KATHRYN: It was music—

(All but Kathryn stretch out on the floor.)

—it was a large empty room inside which the sound could echo, with a hard wooden floor, and guess what—trees, dozens of wee little trees in the distance, I could see through an open door, through which I could feel a slight breeze on my face—

CHARLES: Yes, that does sound like love to me.

VOICE: Where are you hiding, Maurice?

KATHRYN: An echo, that's all.

CHARLES: What?

KATHRYN: An echo. Sweet God—what's an echo, Maurice?

One thing I said, but you didn't understand me. Which is—"what's an echo?"

CHARLES: An echo is when sound bounces off something and comes back to the source.

YUN: But maybe it's love you're imagining. When you imagine an echo.

CHARLES: Yes. I see that.

YUN: You think—I'm not really in love—but just—pick up on a world of echoes. And if that isn't love, Maurice, then there is no such thing as love.

CHARLES: OK. That makes me look into myself with a different perspective, sweetie.

VOICE: Careful.

NIKA: An echo.

CHARLES: An echo.

ADRIENNE: An echo.

SHAUGHN: An echo.

ADRIENNE *(Singing softly)*:

Pack up your troubles
In your old kit bag
And smile, smile, smile—

MONICA *(Pacing nervously)*: Me? I shall cut my hair short tomorrow—

So that you do not know if I have made love to another man when we meet.

VOICE: Oh no!

WALEED: Right now, this is somebody else's future.

(A loud gong. Charles steps forward.)

CHARLES: In the midst of my dreams—

ALLAIN: An echo.

CHARLES: —rounding the corner—

YUN: An echo.

CHARLES: I glimpsed this woman—

(A crash. A woman leaves.)

—but it was not her.

KATHRYN *(Sings)*:

Pack up your troubles
In your old kit bag—

CHARLES: And then, across the street in a cafe I saw this woman, seated—

(A crash, and another woman leaves.)

—but it was not her.

KATHRYN *(Singing louder)*:
Pack up your troubles
In your old kit bag—

CHARLES *(On his knees now)*: And again, smoothing her hair while looking into a shop window—
ADRIENNE: Get up off your knees, please?
CHARLES: No.
ADRIENNE: Stand up, please?
CHARLES: No.
ADRIENNE *(Seductively)*: Must I beat you? Really?

(All laugh and run off, leaving Charles alone.)

CHARLES: And then, a terrible thing happened.
A woman, who had just fallen in love—not with me, alas—asked for my recommendations vis-à-vis . . . erotic poetry.

(The others laugh at him from the wings.)

I was shocked to realize—there was nothing I could recommend.

(The others are sneaking back into the room.)

ADRIENNE: Remember. I have only contempt for a man on his knees.
CHARLES: I resolved to correct this error in the one way possible.
I began to write.
ADRIENNE: OK. What the hell did you write?
CHARLES *(Very quietly)*: This is for you.
MONICA: Well, thank you for nothing.

(A gong sounds as they run to the other side of the stage and offer a minotaur mask to Charles.)

CHARLES: This . . . is for you.
KATHRYN: No! Thank you!

(Charles puts on the mask. It makes him fall forward. Allain grabs the mask and tries to put it on.)

ALLAIN: This is ripped out of me!—
KATHRYN: Girls like me? Girls like me run away from sacrifice.
You are my minotaur and I will no longer feed you.
Because I have found a length of string to lead me to my new love.
WALEED: Climb onto my back right this minute, lady.
KATHRYN: No.
WALEED: OK. I shall sing you to sleep, little girl.
KATHRYN: Your breath is huge.
WALEED: I plow through your long hair, little girl.
KATHRYN: Stay in your maze! Because I have found my true prophet and his name is—
WALEED: No! Oh my goodness—all that is good—
All that is good sleeps in my head.
I am lost in the dark. Where are her hands?
KATHRYN: There are no hands.
Poor old monstrous thing.

(A crash, followed by dance music.)

WALEED *(Shouting over the music)*:
All this built on a stone rampart.
There will be a war on the sea
And tunics and daggers
And she shall sleep on the sand
Stretching to the water
And watch the horizon with empty eyes.

KATHRYN: I can smell your breath. Your books no longer scare me.
WALEED: I'm gonna eat you up, little girl.
KATHRYN: No, mister—I'm gonna bite you in two
And throw away the better half.

(She leaps upon him and he runs away. The others slowly advance on her. There is a silence.)

ALLAIN: Are you OK, lady?
KATHRYN *(Mocking his concern)*: "Are *you* OK, lady?"

ALLAIN *(Sings softly)*:
Here I go—
High and low
Watch my happy dance.

(All start dancing in silence.)

Boys and girls
In the world
Dancing in a trance.

VOICE: Careful.
WALEED: It's true. I have never been faithful to anyone, you know.
ALLAIN: I knew it—I knew it!
KATHRYN: While I was living with the intoxicating Maurice Beaudreaux—stupid me. Guess what, I was still sleeping with my ex-lover—
ALLAIN: Who I never met—
KATHRYN: No, one you did meet. Harold—with the arse of the angels—Anderson.
ALLAIN: I do not remember being introduced to Harold Anderson. *(Pause)* Myself—I have always been faithful to Miranda Osterman.
KATHRYN: Liar.
ALLAIN: In what sense—"Liar"?
KATHRYN: Are you lying to me now?
ALLAIN: Am I lying in your arms now?
KATHRYN: No such thing. Liar.
ADRIENNE: Stupid.
ALLAIN: Yes. But why—why—why?—
VOICE: Careful.
ALLAIN: Why have you been unfaithful to the irresistible Maurice Beaudreaux?

KATHRYN: Because my heart has been capable of such things.
ALLAIN: Ah, let me touch that heart, please.
KATHRYN: Do not touch me, please.

(The others come up behind her, folding their hands over her heart.)

SHAUGHN: Your heart could possibly explode.
VOICE: Careful.

(All but Kathryn run off.)

KATHRYN: Yes, it could do that.
VOICE: No such thing, I'm afraid.

(She comes forward and sees a shrine, with the portraits of saints displayed.)

KATHRYN:
Desire—outside my body—leaning towards
Something disembodied.

YUN *(A gong sounds after each phrase)*:
Our Lady of the Disempowered.
Our Lady of the Broken Hearts.
Our Lady of Miracles.
Our Lady of the Blind, the Lame.
The Broken Ankle.

NIKA *(Kneeling in prayer)*: What do I want so much?
WALEED: Look at me, lady!
NIKA *(With contempt)*: I am—looking at you.
WALEED: You are possessed, think.
NIKA: Oh yes!
WALEED: By a power to uncoil and hold a hundred million thousand men inside your breath—sexless—without even—

(Nika is shaken by spasms. Waleed jumps back in fear.)

Oh shit!— What is that!

NIKA: Please forgive me! I have poisoned your water . . .
WALEED: Never. I will never consume you.
NIKA: But I—alas, I desire only to be consumed.
WALEED: Listen to me.

(A gong sounds.)

I reach a point, maybe—where I vibrate on top of a mountain.
And if I fall down to the north—that's death maybe.
And if I fall down to the south—that's death also.
And if I fall down to the east, or west—

(A gong sounds.)

YUN: All directions are one direction, Maurice.
MAURICE: I am on fire, maybe! Which means—vibrating in all directions.
I never never do fall—until I do fall.

(There is a crash and a flash of light, which frightens everyone.)

But I know inside Miranda Osterman's heart I am indeed, my friends, traveling in all directions at once.
CHARLES: Hey boy, are you OK?
WALEED: No, I don't think so—not at all!
CHARLES: In that case—

(Sings:)

Pack up your troubles
In your old kit bag
And smile, smile, smile.

YUN *(Creeping through the shadows)*: What do I turn into? A silver light. Where are you, Maurice?

(Crash. Others run on with pillows.)

In the big bed. Ohhhhh! Watch out for the snake. Watch out Maurice. My heart, my heart is a big circle of light.
VOICE: Careful.
KATHRYN: Guess what I see, ladies? I see light that does not bounce.
NIKA: No bed, no room, no weight. Just his body still there in front of me, like a silver light shooting inside my head.

(A gong makes them all stagger.)

WALEED: Oh my goodness!
KATHRYN: Even an empty room can have a feeling.
SHAUGHN: There are some things Miranda Osterman herself feels. That I—me—for certain cannot feel.
KATHRYN: Careful.
VOICE: Careful.
NIKA: Guess what.
VOICE: Careful.
NIKA: You are the person I've been looking for.
SHAUGHN: Oh? Guess what. In no way, ladies, will I gratify your expectations.
NIKA: Then by all means, watch me and weep. *(She is shaken by convulsions)*
SHAUGHN: Oh shit! Oh shit shit shit!

(The blackboards roll apart and the room becomes a vast, empty hall as Shaughn sings in a loud, bellowing voice:)

You maaaaaade me love you
I didn't want to do it!
I didn't want to do it!
You maaaaade me want you
And all the time you knew it!
You know—you really knew it!

(He falls to the floor. All surround him.)

MONICA: You stupid boy.
NIKA: Stupid.

SHAUGHN: Then you do come, after all, from another world, Miranda Osterman? *(Runs to the rear)*

(Dance music begins, and they all dance a Lindy Hop while Shaughn shouts out against the music:)

You made me love you
I didn't want to do it!
I didn't want to do it!

MONICA: Guess what?— I believe I do come from another world—can't you tell?

(A crash, and the music stops.)

ADRIENNE: Where are you hiding, Maurice?
ALLAIN: Deep inside Miranda Osterman, maybe.
SHAUGHN: That's not something I want to believe.
MONICA: Too late for such choices, lover boy.
ALLAIN: Oh, it's never too late.
ADRIENNE: Does Maurice really believe that?

(Pause.)

Well, does he?

(Yun runs into the room, screaming, holding a picture of a saint over her head.)

YUN: Fire!

(They all run to the rear. Yun turns and smiles at the audience.)

You see? There's an easier way.

(The blackboards close in and make a small room at the front of the stage.)

You see? There's an easier way.

(A gong. A Falsetto Voice is heard repeating: "I'm hearin' the words. I'm hearin' the words." Then everything is quiet. There is an otherworldly light, and a soft organ tone. Everyone speaks and moves slowly. They are praying, internally.)

LAWRENCE: I am a man . . . who could never believe such things are possible.
YUN: This is the funnel through which everything comes from another world . . . into this world.
SHAUGHN: Does that mean I have to disappear inside myself?
YUN: Yes. This falling backwards inside one's head—this is the funnel.
SHAUGHN: No. Because Miranda Osterman's body disappears into a space that gets emptier and emptier. And this emptiness—this is the funnel.
YUN: Even if you carry me into another world completely—my body is still here in this world.
CHARLES: Then hold me, goddamn it.

(Veiled Minotaur heads, placed on serving platters, are slowly carried into the room.)

Hold my thoughts, that are inside and outside my body at the same time!
NIKA: I sever those thoughts, and sever your head, John the Baptist.
CHARLES: Hold me—
NIKA: I would kiss you, John the Baptist—kiss you with your head on a platter and your blue tongue inside my mouth.
ADRIENNE: I kiss your blue tongue while you are asleep. *(Whispers)* This is fate . . . unveiled.

(The veils are removed.)

ALLAIN: Then this . . . is what's here.
ADRIENNE: Yes. This is here. And this is one single thing.
ALLAIN: Then this . . . is OK.
ADRIENNE: Yes. A little excitement.

(The others, who have been facing the blackboards with their hands touching its black surface, suddenly scream and pull away as if they have received an electric shock.)

CHARLES: Careful, it depends what you mean by excitement—

(There is a crash, and the lights flash. Some fall to their knees.)

—which could be a recipe for disaster.

KATHRYN: Once upon a time—I inhabited the kingdom of flesh, and inside that kingdom—

SHAUGHN: No—I will never belong inside—that painful kingdom.

YUN: But you do belong to that kingdom, Maurice.

And this is OK of course—because—since we are cast down into flesh—is it not appropriate to live in flesh?

CHARLES: Appropriate, yes—but not sufficiently heroic, I believe.

KATHRYN: Oh I believe that you are wrong. And I think it very heroic to live inside this flesh—just watch me—watch me.

(She starts to shake convulsively.)

NIKA: Look what happens. It starts to shake. Shaking and shaking the world to pieces.

(She also starts to shake. Then both women are still.)

SHAUGHN: But me—thank God—I am no longer there—inside that shaking— *(He shakes)* And shaking . . .

(Nika and Kathryn hold him still.)

ADRIENNE: But nobody—

(A flash of bright light. The blackboards lurch forward and everyone jumps back in fear.)

Nobody is there, inside that shaking and shaking— *(She starts to shake)*

ALLAIN: Inside that— *(He starts to shake)*

(All gather to watch Allain as the music rises. It then cuts off, and everything stops. There is a pause. Then Kathryn laughs, and the others slowly join in.)

KATHRYN: Now!

(Everyone stops to listen to her.)

Now, finally. Here is no flesh left, inside that shaking.

ALLAIN: OK. Ten years ago, I was in love with Miranda Osterman. And it lasted, until it was over and done with. And at that moment—love was suddenly available to me.

(The others suddenly turn and push the blackboards to the side, and Allain is left alone in a vast space.)

But—how to access that love, suddenly available to me at the end of love. That was my problem.

(He turns and looks at the others, then turns back to the audience.)

That was my problem.

(The lights slowly fade.)

THE END